

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

November 19, 2003

**INSPECTOR GENERAL ISSUES SCATHING REPORT OF
VISA LOTTERY PROGRAM**

Dear Colleague:

The Visa Lottery program was established by the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1990, and conducts an annual lottery whereby 50, 000 foreign nationals are chosen at random to enter the U.S. as permanent residents. However, the program poses national security risks and is wrought with fraud. Please read these quotes from the State Department's Inspector General's report regarding the program:

- "... OIG [Office of Inspector General] believes that this [Visa Lottery] program contains **significant threats to national security** from entry of hostile intelligence officers, criminals, and terrorists into the United States as permanent residents."
- "The [Visa Lottery] program is subject to **widespread abuse**."
- "Identity fraud is endemic, and **fraudulent documents are commonplace**."
- "Many countries exercise poor control over their vital records and identity documents, exacerbating the potential for program abuse. In some countries, this control is so poor that consular officers must assume that all travel, identity, and civil documents are unreliable."
- "**Program costs significantly exceed revenues**. In addition, the KCC [Kentucky Consular Center – the Center where all applications are evaluated and processed] and embassies, as well as [the Directorate of Visa Services], have insufficient resources to develop, investigate, and process all applications fully. The KCC cannot review all applications for duplicate filings.
- "Attorneys at the Federal Trade Commission expressed concern that unscrupulous 'entrepreneurs' were making spurious claims on the Internet that they could help applicants be [Visa Lottery] winners."
- The Inspector General also reported that during the 2003 Visa Lottery program, the State Department found that **364,000 duplicate applications were submitted**. The only current penalty for such abuse of the system is disqualification in that year's lottery.

Congressman Goodlatte has introduced a bill that will eliminate the Visa Lottery program. This bill will enhance national security and eliminate fraud and opportunism. Please join us in this **bi-partisan** effort to restore dignity to our nation's visa allocation system. To cosponsor this important legislation, please contact Branden Ritchie in Congressman Goodlatte's office at 5-5431.



Bob Goodlatte
Member of Congress